LORADO TAFT MIDWAY STUDIOS

6016 South Ingleside Avenue
Chicago, Illinois

Preliminary Staff Summary of Information
Submitted to the Commission on Chicago Landmarks
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6016 South Ingleside Avenue
Chicago, Illinois

Built: **Before 1906; additions in 1908 and subsequent years; moved and rebuilt, 1929; extensive renovation, 1964; subsequent additions**

Architect: **Original building and early additions, unknown; 1929 reconstruction, Otis Floyd Johnson; 1964 renovation, Edward D. Dart**

Named after their founder Lorado Taft and for their location near the Midway Plaisance, the Lorado Taft Midway Studios have served as a center of artistic and educational activity since the early years of this century. Taft, a sculptor who worked in the monumental style associated with the *Ecole des Beaux Arts* in Paris, was a well-known and respected figure in the artistic community of the Midwest during the years between Chicago's two World's Fairs, held in 1893 and 1933. Taft energetically sought to further art education on all levels, writing and lecturing for the interested public at large while at the same time teaching advanced courses at local art schools. One of the most important elements of his educational effort was embodied by his studio, which he used as a training center modeled after those of the early 1400s in Italy. Seeking to give young artists the opportunity to learn the techniques of artistic production in a working studio environment, Taft built a facility that served as a dormitory, dining hall, theatrical stage, and forum for debate, in addition to housing his creative operations. Using the Italian Renaissance studios of sculptors such as Lorenzo Ghiberti and Donatello as his model, his goal was to create an opportunity for aspiring artists to live in an environment where creative issues were dominant.

In addition to its educational function, the Lorado Taft Midway Studios were the venue in which many of Taft's most famous works were realized. Known for his monumental-scale memorials and fountains, Taft spent the last thirty years of his life working at this site. As the scale of Taft's reputation and commissions grew during the first two decades of this century, the studios expanded to accommodate his vision for sculptural groups of great size as well as an increasing number of assistants in what became a slowly growing complex of interconnected buildings.

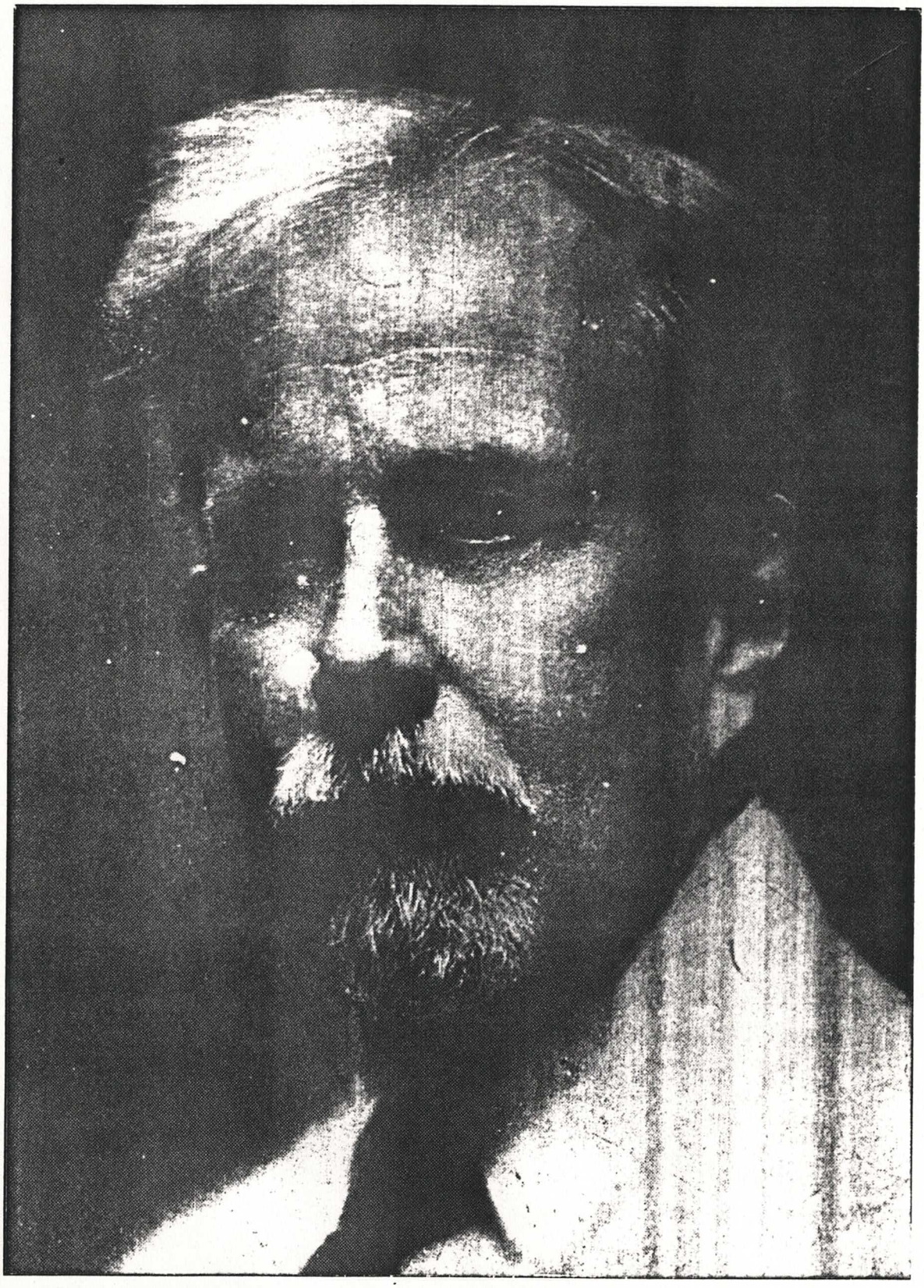
The Life and Career of Lorado Taft

Born in Elmwood, Illinois, in 1860, Lorado Taft achieved an esteemed and significant place in the history of sculpture in Chicago and the United States. His father, Don Carlos Taft, was raised on a farm in New Hampshire and had worked his way through Amherst College and the Union Theological Seminary. Since his views on religion were considered too liberal for the times and resulted in his firing from a number of congregations, the elder Taft had abandoned his effort to be a minister and had settled on a career teaching geology, his area of specialty in college. It was as a geologist that Don Carlos Taft became a professor at the Illinois Technical University in Champaign, the precursor to the University of Illinois. Lorado's mother was also a teacher, taking music students privately in their home, and was known locally for her activities on behalf of women's suffrage. Educated at home and the product of an academically-oriented family environment, Lorado Taft was encouraged to be inquisitive and was given access to an unusually wide gamut of information for the times in written, musical, and spoken forms.

In the post-Civil War era, the arts in the Midwest were still largely in an unsophisticated stage of development. There were few academically-trained artists practicing in the region, and few schools at any level put an emphasis on arts education. Considered the exclusive provenance of the wealthy, the little patronage for the arts that did exist was focused on the products of the East Coast and of Europe. With the intention of addressing this situation, the president of the fledgling University of Illinois proposed that a school of fine and applied arts be founded. In the belief that students learn from example and realizing that there was little in the way of high quality art work available in the state, the faculty determined that, as an aid to students studying the arts, a gallery of great European sculpture of the past be set up on campus. After money was collected, a faculty member was sent overseas to purchase plaster copies of famous works of sculpture.

On his return from Europe in the spring of 1874, the professor was assisted in uncrating the casts by Don Carlos Taft. Finding that a number of the pieces had been damaged in transit, they attempted to fit them back together with little success. Lorado, who was fascinated with the objects and wanted to have first-hand knowledge of them, asked his father if he might try to repair one of the pieces. Impressing the men with the care and detail of his work, they later gave him the assignment of repairing all of the damaged casts, a task he accomplished with a great deal of enthusiasm. In Taft's words, seeing and repairing the reproductions was one of the most significant events in his life, and from that point he was interested in pursuing the study of sculpture. This experience was also responsible for his insistence much later in life that the Midway Studios have full-size plaster casts of famous sculptural figures and architectural fragments available for the study and edification of the members of his studio.

Taft began his experiments in sculpture later that year, modeling clay and working with plaster. The first piece he submitted for a public exhibition, a representation of a bald eagle rendered in plaster, was accepted for the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876, within weeks of his sixteenth birthday. Although the piece was knocked off of its perch by high winds in the weeks before the fair opened, its acceptance was enough of an endorsement of his talent



Lorado Taft at about the age of 65, ca. 1925. *(Photographer unknown)*

to encourage Taft to major in sculpture when he entered the University of Illinois that fall. A star pupil at the University, he graduated with a major in fine art at the age of nineteen in 1879. Although he wanted to leave immediately for further study in Paris, his parents convinced him that he was too young and would be better served by continuing his education at Illinois for another year. On the day he received his Master of Fine Arts degree in June, 1880, Taft boarded the train that took him to New York on the first leg of his trip to Paris. Admitted to the *Ecole des Beaux Arts*, he studied in the *atelier* of Professor Dumont from 1880 through 1885 and was also apprenticed for a short time to Mercier. Among the best students in his class, Taft received a number of citations and had works accepted in the *Salons* of 1882, 1883, and 1885.

Taft returned to the United States in 1886 when he received a commission for a life-size memorial figure to be erected at Indianapolis, Indiana. Taking the commission as a sign that the future of the arts in the Midwest was a bright one, he decided to return to Illinois and chose to settle in Chicago. Establishing a career was difficult not only because of his youth and relative lack of experience in marketing his work, but also because of the small number of local opportunities for sculptural projects at the time. His first major commissions were monumental bronze memorials and both, the ***Schuyler Colfax Memorial*** in Indianapolis, cast in 1887, and the ***General Ulysses S. Grant Memorial*** of 1889 in Leavenworth, Kansas, received encouraging responses. Most of Taft's energy at this time was spent on much smaller projects however, such as designs for medals, plaques, and household fixtures, including fireplace screens. In 1892 Taft's fortunes changed significantly: he became a full-time instructor at the newly expanded School of the Art Institute, took a part-time position as a "Professorial Lecturer on the History of Art" at the newly opened University of Chicago, and was named superintendent of sculpture, with commissions for two pieces to be erected at the entrance to the Horticultural Building, for the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893.

In order to support himself during this period, Taft found it necessary to take on a number of jobs that were separate from yet tangential to his work as a sculptor. Teaching studio courses in the sculpture department of the School of the Art Institute occupied the majority of this time, however he was often involved in other writing and lecturing projects. A new interest in the arts had been aroused throughout the Midwest by the World's Columbian Exposition, and Taft, as the superintendent of and the only Chicagoan to participate in the sculptural program for the fair, became a popular spokesperson for the artistic aspects of the Exposition and for the arts in general. A believer in the power of art to elevate the mind and alleviate the problems of the human condition, Taft pursued the education of the general public as if it were a second calling, lecturing often and occasionally going on tour. Proceeds from these lectures were put into the operation of his studio, including support for his assistants in the form of room and materials. The extent of Taft's proselytizing was demonstrated by a comment he made near the end of his life, that he had given lectures in every state except Florida. The longest of his tours took him to France from January to June, 1919, where he was involved in a program sponsored by the Young Men's Christian Organization to bring educational programs to American troops.

In his writings as well as his lectures, Taft sought to educate and expose an ever wider audience to the arts. Asked to review local exhibitions for a number of newspapers, he

assumed the role of art critic, proudly carrying the torch of the academic style of the *Ecole des Beaux Arts*. This work led, among other things, to his being sent back to Paris by the *Chicago Inter Ocean* newspaper to review of the *Salon d'Automne* of 1900. In addition to studio courses in sculpture, Taft lectured at the Art Institute and the University of Chicago on the history of sculpture. In time the sequence of courses led him to present a course on sculpture in the United States, a subject that had been, to his mind, too long ignored. Championing the cause of American sculpture in his newspaper articles and lectures, his efforts to draw attention to the subject were rewarded with an offer from the Macmillan Company to write a comprehensive history. Taft's *History of American Sculpture* was the first written on the subject, and it became a standard text for many years. Originally published in 1903 and reissued with additional chapters in the 1920s, it turned out to be one of his most enduring contributions to the study of American sculpture.

Taft also was a founder of a number of local institutions dedicated to furthering the arts. Impressed by the experience of working with and in the company of so many artists during his student days in Paris and again at the World's Columbian Exposition, Taft sought to promote the production and social interaction of artists through a variety of venues. Among these was the Palette & Chisel Academy, established by Taft and others in 1898 and located on Chicago's Near North Side. Founded as an informal center for instruction in figurative art, the Palette & Chisel has continued to provide programs in drawing, painting and sculpture throughout this century. Another project was the founding of the Eagle's Nest Camp at Oregon, Illinois. Established in 1898, Eagle's Nest became an annual summer retreat for Taft and his circle. Set up on fifteen acres of land overlooking the Rock River and owned by Chicago lawyer Wallace Heckman, it was made available to the artists for the cost of the property taxes plus one dollar and two annual lectures on art for the local community. Although tents were used for the first few years, by 1904 cabins for residential and studio use had been built, largely by the artists in residence, and these continued to be used by Taft for many years. Now part of Lowden State Park, the facility is still used by the Northern Illinois University Art Department for its summer programs.

As a sculptor, Taft became known as one of the preeminent designers of public monuments in the Midwestern states, where many of his commemorative and memorial figures still stand. Among these were Civil War memorials in Jackson, Michigan, and in Danville and Oregon, Illinois; ***Eternal Silence (Dexter Graves Monument)*** and ***The Crusader (Victor Lawson Monument)*** in Graceland Cemetery, Chicago; the ***George Washington, Robert Morris, and Haym Salomon Memorial*** in Chicago; and the forty-foot tall monument to ***Black Hawk*** in Oregon, Illinois. The works for which Taft was most widely acclaimed were fountain groups done on a monumental scale for prominent public spaces. These included the ***Columbus Fountain*** of 1912, erected in front of Union Station in Washington, D.C.; the ***Fountain of the Great Lakes***, completed in 1913 in memory of Chicagoan and patron of public sculpture B. F. Ferguson, and installed outside the Art Institute of Chicago; the 1917 ***Thatcher Memorial Fountain*** in Denver, Colorado; and the ***Fountain of Time***, completed in 1922 and erected at the western end of the Midway Plaisance in Chicago's Washington Park.

The ***George Washington, Robert Morris, Haym Salomon Memorial***, begun by Taft in about 1931 and finished posthumously by his associate Leonard Crunelle, was cast in 1941. Commemorating the contributions of Morris and Salomon, the main financiers of the Revolution, it was dedicated on the 150th anniversary of the adoption of the Bill of Rights in December, 1941. *(Photograph by Barbara Crane)*

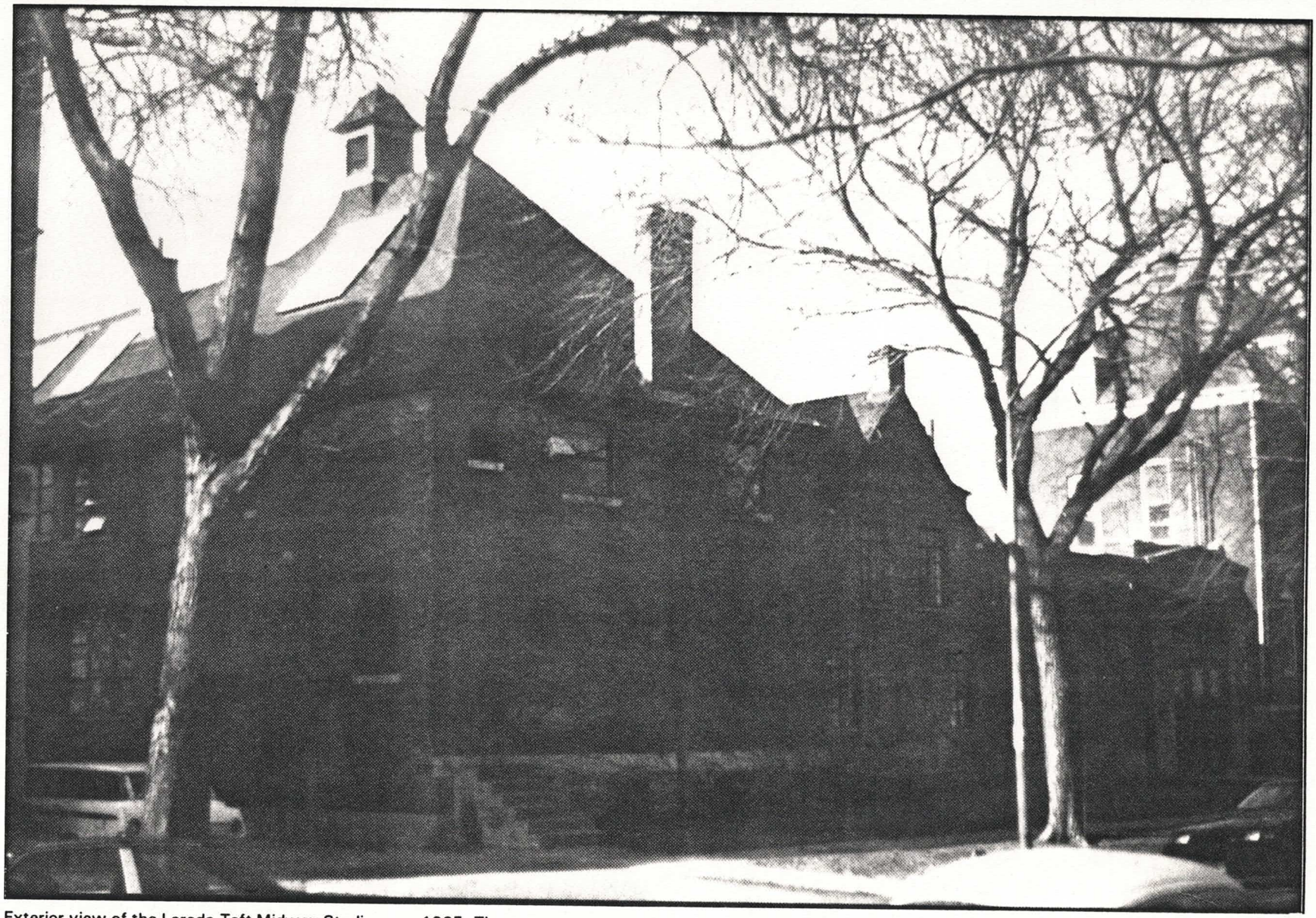
The ***Fountain of Time*** was intended by Taft to be the first of many works in a massive sculptural program for the Midway Plaisance. The piece, which is semi-circular in plan, is characterized by a semicircular wave of human figures moving in unison before and around a solitary shrouded figure at the center of the radius. The moving figures, which are seemingly driven forward by an unseen force, are separated from the stationary figure by a large, still pool. The ***Fountain of Time*** was inspired by a phrase Taft took from a poem by Austin Dobson: "Time goes, you say? Ah, no, Alas, time stays; we go."

Approved in concept in 1914 by the same Ferguson Fund that provided financial support for Taft's ***Fountain of the Great Lakes***, work on the ***Fountain of Time*** was started in the wake of the public and critical success of the earlier piece. Originally intended to be carved in marble, Taft imagined that the majority of the physical labor would be done by his assistants at the nearby Midway Studios. Delays in the execution of the work, some of which were due to the entry of the United States into the First World War, and changes in artistic taste, inspired in part by greater knowledge of contemporary *avant-garde* sculpture in Europe, were putting Taft's classically-derived form of expression out of favor. Finding his support flagging and unable to otherwise raise the funds necessary to complete the project in stone, Taft decided to realize it using a new form of hollow cast concrete reinforced with steel. Completed and dedicated in the Fall of 1922, the ***Fountain of Time*** is currently in the process of being stabilized and repaired with funds from the Ferguson Fund and the Chicago Park District.

Although this project was successfully completed, Taft found himself increasingly excluded for stylistic reasons from consideration for the many new large-scale public commissions that were being proposed during the middle and late 1920s in Chicago. After the completion of the ***Fountain of Time*** the majority of Taft's commissions involved smaller projects in small towns, exemplified by such works as the ***Shaler Memorial Angel*** of 1923 erected in Waupun, Wisconsin; ***Lincoln, the Young Lawyer*** of 1927 in Urbana, Illinois; and the ***Charles Page Memorial*** of 1930 in Sand Springs, Oklahoma. In spite of changes in taste and patronage, the problems presented by figurative groups on a monumental scale continued to preoccupy Taft until the end of his career. Although they were not on the scale of the ***Columbus Fountain*** or the ***Fountain of the Great Lakes***, Taft's late works included four large figurative groups: ***Alma Mater***, executed for the University of Illinois in 1929; ***The Patriots*** and ***The Pioneers***, installed at the new Louisiana State Capitol in Baton Rouge in 1933; and ***Justice***, for the tower of the Federal Building at the Century of Progress World's Fair in Chicago, also completed in 1933.

Taft and the Establishment of the Midway Studios

From 1888 to 1896 Taft had a studio on Van Buren Street in the Loop, and from 1897 through 1906 his studio space was on the tenth floor of the Fine Arts Building, on Michigan Avenue two blocks south of the Art Institute. Since he lived, at various times, on the North and South Sides of the city during these years, the central location of these studios relative to transportation facilities and to the Art Institute afforded certain obvious advantages. The prox-



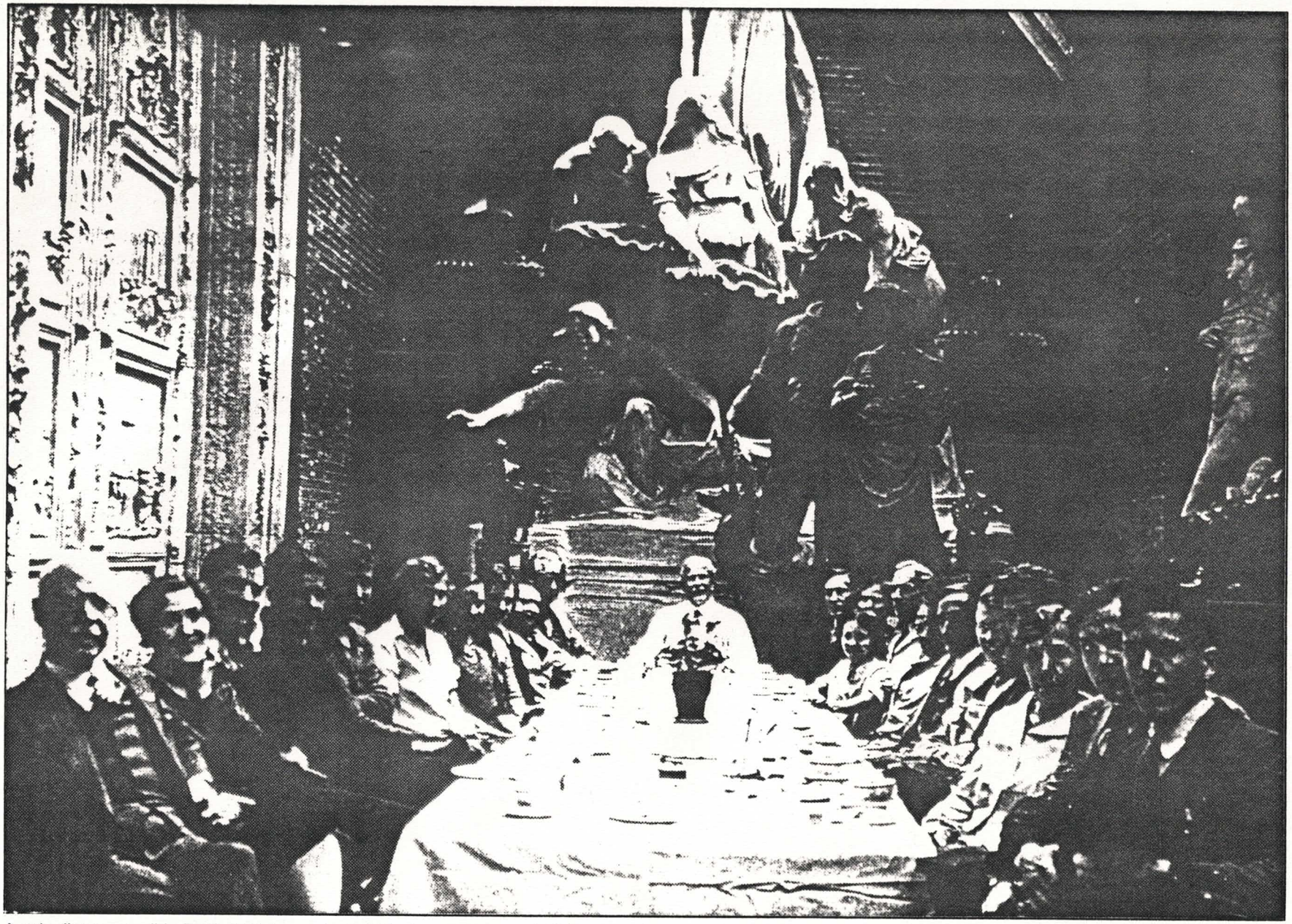
Exterior view of the Lorado Taft Midway Studios, ca. 1985. The two-story structure at the left is the original brick barn that served as Taft's studio from 1906 to 1936. *(Photograph by Timothy Samuelson)*

imity of the studios to other cultural institutions Taft patronized, including the Auditorium and Orchestra Hall, was also an advantage.

Over time, however, the restrictions on Taft's studio space forced him to consider other options. Having insisted from the beginning of his tenure in Chicago on using his studio as a place to give aspiring artists experience, he opened it to anyone who was interested in the process of creating sculpture. Helping support his often impoverished students with his own funds, his studio included simple shelves that functioned by day as work tables and by night as bunk beds. Letting his assistants live in the studio for weeks at a time and sponsoring amateur theatrical and musical productions in the studio as a means of broadening their experience with other forms of expression, Taft was occasionally in trouble with his landlords for violating the terms of his lease. With spaces of inadequate size and shape, having little room for expansion, and lacking easier access to kilns and bronze casting facilities, the location became less desirable. Additionally, as the scale and number of figures in Taft's compositions increased, the size and load limits of the elevators made the movement of models, casts, and equipment increasingly problematic. Determined to do away with these inconveniences and to form what he considered to be a true *atelier*, Taft sought a new studio location. He found his new facility through the University of Chicago, which offered an abandoned brick structure, described variously as a barn or a coach house, on property it owned at the corner of South Ellis Avenue and East 60th Street near the Midway. The first of many buildings in the complex, this building would serve as Taft's personal studio from the time he first occupied it in 1906 until his death in 1936.

Taft was determined to make his new studio a center of broad artistic activity, with a working space for himself and dormitories and work areas for a large number of artists working in various media. Within a year he acquired two frame barns which he had moved to the site and connected to the brick studio building. Converted into dormitories respectively for men and women, these were the first of many additions to the structure that would eventually provide studio spaces and the necessary equipment for sculptors, painters, ceramicists, and those working in graphic media. Many of the people who worked with Taft at the studio were people that he encountered at his lectures, some of whom brought examples of their work to his talks for his evaluation. Those who showed promise were encouraged to continue their studies and, if space was available, were invited "to join his creative family." Taft had no intention of creating a school in the formal sense, and encouraged all of the people working and living at the space he christened the "Midway Studios" to pursue their education at one of the art schools elsewhere in the city. Nevertheless, in Taft's mind the studios served as an informal school based on the *bottega*, or workshop, of the Italian Renaissance, where training through experience, as opposed to formal instruction, was paramount. While Taft was accused of being too slavishly bound to the standards of academic forms of instruction by some of his critics he felt that the accusation was not justified, due in large part to his insistence on returning to a pre-academic model of artistic training where experience took precedence over formulae or learning by rote.

By 1909 four more studios were added to the complex, one each for Taft's former students Leonard Crunelle, George E. Ganiere, John G. Prashun, and Nellie V. Walker. Saying that he built "like the chambered nautilus, one chamber at a time", Taft eventually had



A gala dinner, possibly Taft's birthday party, held in the reconstructed Midway Studios court sometime in 1930. Taft is seated at the head of the table, and the architect of the reconstruction, Otis F. Johnson, is seated to Taft's left. The group includes the sculptors Fred and Mable Torrey, and Nellie Walker. *(Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, The University of Chicago Library)*

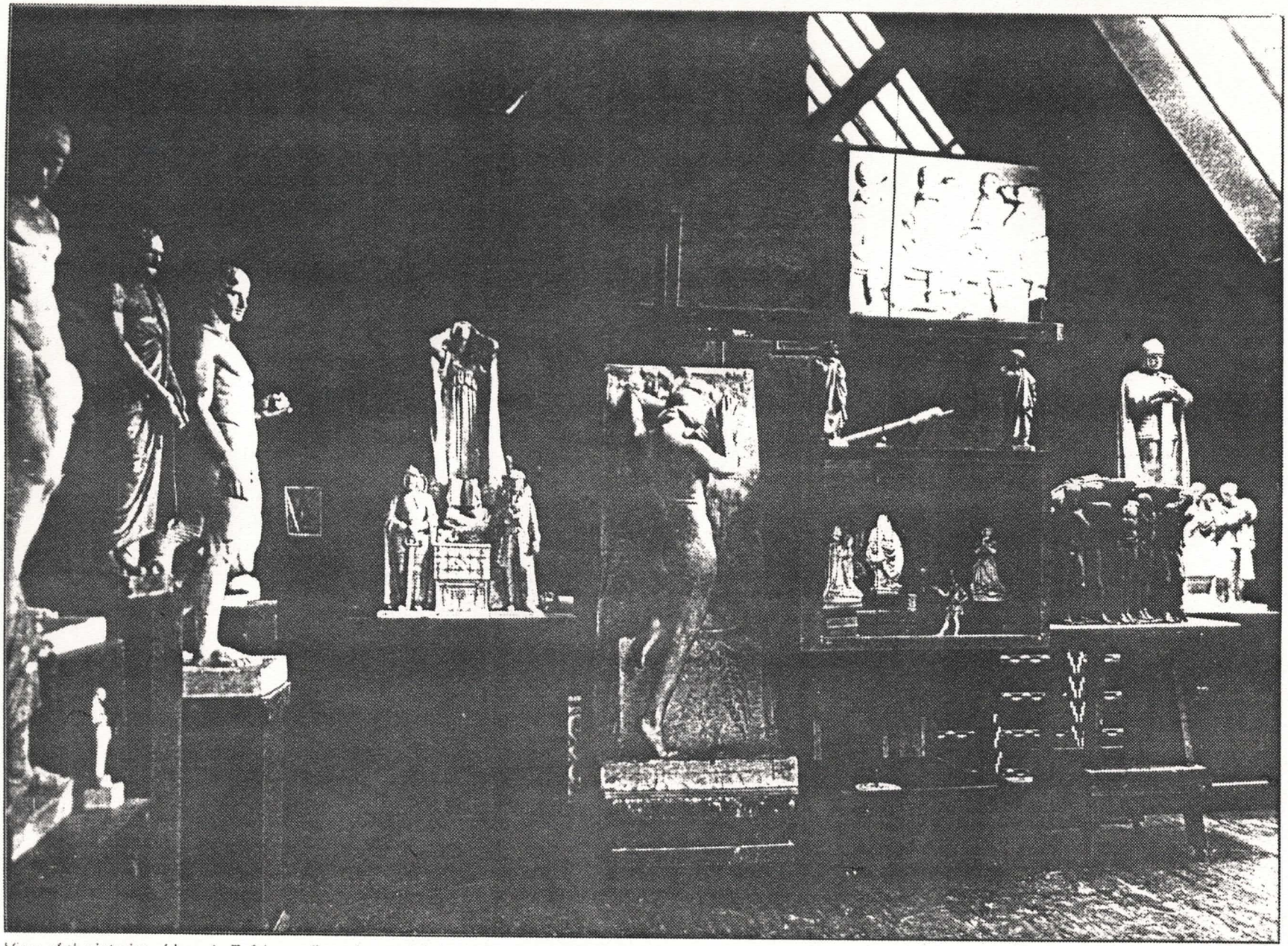
a total of thirteen additions made to the Midway Studios, with dormitory space for up to twenty assistants, a kitchen, and a central court for group functions such as meals and musical and theatrical presentations. Group activities, designed to encourage camaraderie and to supplement the creative environment, were scheduled regularly and were essential to the experience Taft wanted the studio to engender. Guests were encouraged to observe and participate, and the studio was open to visitors on a regular basis. In addition to the colony of artists gathered under the Midway Studios roof, Taft's activities formed a nucleus that encouraged other local artists, such as the sculptor Frederick C. Hibbard, to set up their studios in the Hyde Park neighborhood.

The University of Chicago, which owned the land under the studios, informed Taft in 1929 that it needed the property for a new building and would move his facility. The original brick barn which included Taft's personal studio space on the second floor, was moved in its entirety from the original site on the west side of Ellis Avenue, just south of 60th Street, one block east to the west frontage of Ingleside Avenue south of 60th. The additions, some of which were brick and some of frame, were largely demolished; however, their materials were salvaged and reused in the reconstruction of the studios on the new site. Little is known about the architect for the project, Otis Floyd Johnson, whose residence was listed as the Midway Studios in the directories of the time. Although the studios were reconstructed using a plan that differed significantly from the original, much of the fabric, including bricks, doors, window frames and sash, were brought from the previous site. Moving and rebuilding started in September, 1929, and was completed by the end of January, 1930. It was at this time that Taft acquired the house neighboring the new studio site at the corner of Ingleside Avenue and 60th Street. This three-story brick house, built in a restrained Queen Anne style circa 1885, became his residence and was attached to the studio complex by means of another addition.

On October 26, 1936, while working on a clay model of ***Aspiration*** in his second floor space at the Midway Studios, Lorado Taft suffered a fatal stroke. He died on October 30, and his wake was held the next day in the court of the Studios, the site of many gala events sponsored by and for the artist during his lifetime. Taft's body was subsequently cremated, and his ashes were scattered over his native town of Elmwood, Illinois.

The Lorado Taft Midway Studios Since 1936

After Taft's death the studios gradually fell into a state of disrepair, and many of the artists who had been in residence moved out. A few continued to use the space, most notably including Leonard Crunelle who was working to finish Taft's last incomplete large-scale work, the ***George Washington-Robert Morris-Haym Salomon Memorial.*** Completed and cast in bronze in 1941, the memorial was dedicated on the 150th anniversary of the Bill of Rights in December, 1941, in Chicago's Heald Square at North Wabash Avenue and East Wacker Drive. The ***George Washington-Robert Morris-Haym Salomon Memorial*** was designated a Chicago Landmark in 1971.



View of the interior of Lorado Taft's studio as it was left by the sculptor at the time of his fatal stroke in October, 1936. *(Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, The University of Chicago Library)*

At the urging of Rexford Newcombe, Dean of the College of Fine and Applied Arts, the University of Illinois purchased Taft's personal property in the Midway Studios from his estate late in 1936 for $10,000. The collection included small studies and intermediate-sized clay sketches of many of Taft's works, as well as full-scale plaster casts of a few major pieces in their final form, such as the ***Fountain of the Great Lakes*** that stood in the court. The purchase also included all of the plaster casts of European Renaissance sculpture Taft displayed in the court, and the miniature "peep shows" of historic scenes Taft was building for educational purposes.

The buildings, which had always stood on land owned by the University of Chicago, were apparently acquired by or given to that institution after Taft's death. Largely defined from its founding as a center for empirical research in the sciences, the University of Chicago had offered few courses in the arts up to this time, including them only as part of a larger liberal arts curriculum. Although he had taught at the University from its founding in 1892 until the 1930s, Taft had always been an adjunct member of the faculty working on annual contracts and was never tenured. During the 1940s the University used the studios in part for storage, while continuing to use other areas for basic artistic instruction.

The University of Chicago established a range of degree programs in the fine arts in 1956, giving the Midway Studios new importance. Largely through the efforts of Professor Edward Maser, chairman of the new art department which included programs in art history and the studio, and particularly of Professor Harold Haydon, a painter and the newly appointed director of the Midway Studios, a tenure-track faculty was hired, a visiting artist program was established, and plans were made to renovate the studio buildings. The first phase of the renovation, intended to bring the building up to minimal code standards, was completed in March, 1962, for $7,009. Plans were prepared for an extensive structural renovation at this time by Edward D. Dart, an architect who donated his time to the project.

In order to celebrate the first phase of its renovation, and running concurrently with the centennial celebration of the establishment of the Village of Hyde Park, Professor Haydon organized an exhibition of the work of Lorado Taft in the Midway Studios court. Opening early in May, 1962, the exhibition included many works by Taft that had been bought by the University of Illinois and had never been on display since they had been moved from the Midway Studios in the 1930s. The exhibition also included works by Taft loaned by his family and students, and Dart's drawings of the proposed future renovations, used to encourage financial support for the next two phases of construction.

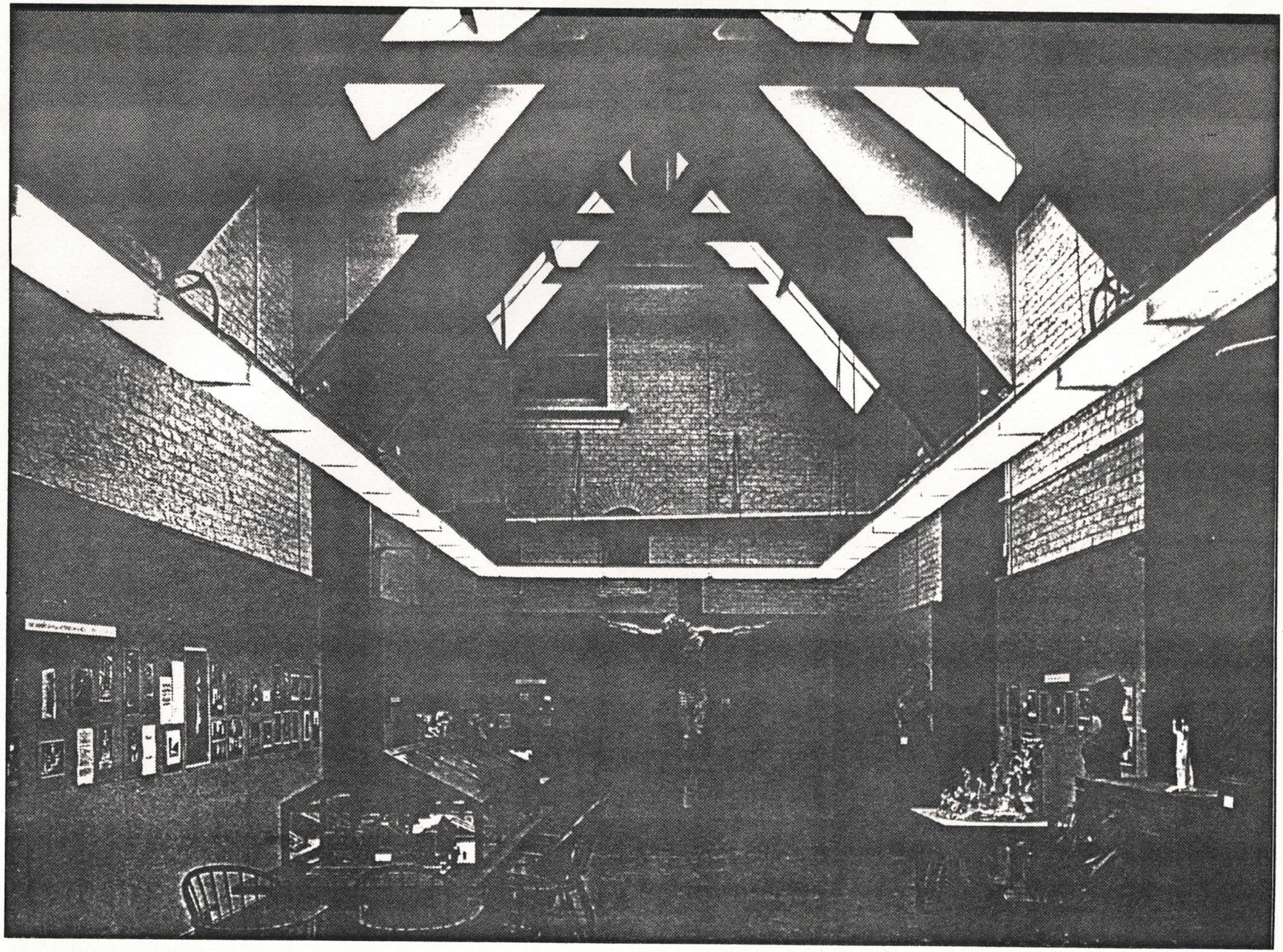
With the financial help of the Women's Board of the University, the second phase of the renovation was started in February, 1964, and completed that November. Done in piecemeal fashion to allow classes to continue uninterrupted, the renovation included the replacement of wooden structural supports with steel and the removal of much of the original plaster, lath, and insulation to be replaced with plasterboard and concrete block. The renovation's final phase, which included new heating, plumbing, electrical, and lighting systems, was finished in the spring of 1966. The total cost of the second and third phases of the renovation came to $212,000.

Concurrently celebrating the completed renovation, the listing of the studios on the National Register of Historic Places as a National Historic Landmark, and the 75th anniversary

of the University, the Art Department commemorated the official reopening of the facility on May 14, 1966, by rededicating it the "Lorado Taft Midway Studios". The buildings have since continued to serve the Department of Art of the University of Chicago, and thereby continue to support the creative and educational activities intended by their founder. With an increase in the number of faculty and the expansion of the graduate degree program, further additions have been made to the rear of the building where they are not visible from the street, the largest of which forms a painting studio. There are now eleven large studios used for classes and seven smaller loft studios used by graduate students or for offices. Tentative plans to demolish the house that was incorporated into the studio in favor of an addition for the Renaissance Society Gallery, a lecture hall and a library, as shown in Dart's 1964 proposal, were never pursued. The Cochrane-Woods Art Center, a separate facility with a building for the art history faculty and lecture halls, an outdoor sculpture court, and the David and Alfred Smart Museum of Art, was built in the 1970s on a site near the main library. By this action the University effectively kept the creative and academic branches of the art department in separate locations, preserving the original function of the Midway Studios and assuring that an addition of overwhelming size, with significantly different functions and design, would not occur.

The Impact of Lorado Taft

The impact Lorado Taft had on the artistic community in Chicago was a profound and lasting one. The most famous sculptor of his generation in the Midwest, his works are found in fourteen states from coast to coast and in the District of Columbia. Although his most famous sculptural projects were realized in a style based on academic concepts that were considered dated by the end of his lifetime, his dedication to advancing the arts in general and sculpture in particular includes an impressive list of accomplishments. Through his lectures and writings Taft enhanced public awareness of the beautification of public spaces, wrote the first history of American sculpture, provided an unprecedented public outreach for arts education, and created an unique training facility for young artists at the Midway Studios. His dedication to elevating the mind and enhancing life through art and education was a life-long pursuit, and was embodied by the development of the Midway Studios. Although its physical plant was supported by the University, the operations of the studio were funded entirely out of the sculptor's own pocket. The studios were an experiment that required a great deal of time, energy, and resources, and demonstrated the depth of Taft's commitment to the future of the art of sculpture in America. The continuation of artistic and educational activity at the site is a tribute to the prominence of Taft's career that serves to perpetuate his dream for the dissemination and advancement of artistic ideas.



View of the interior of the court of the Lorado Taft Midway Studios, ca. 1975. The court, once the communal space of the studios used for daily meals and various live performances, is now used as a gallery space for the exhibition of works by students in the Department of Art at the University of Chicago. *(Photographer unknown;*

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Additional research material used in the preparation of this report is on file at the office of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks and is available to the public.

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Staff for this publication: Timothy N. Wittman, research and writing

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The Commission on Chicago Landmarks was established in 1968 by city ordinance, and was given the responsibility of recommending to the City Council that specific landmarks be preserved and protected by law. The ordinance states that the Commission, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor, can recommend any area, building, structure, work of art, or other object that has sufficient historical, community, or aesthetic value. Once the City Council acts on the Commission's recommendation and designates a Chicago Landmark, the ordinance provides for the preservation, protection, enhancement, rehabilitation, and perpetuation of that landmark. The Commission assists by carefully reviewing all applications for building permits pertaining to the designated Chicago Landmarks. This insures that any proposed alteration does not detract from the qualities that caused the landmark to be designated.

The Commission makes its recommendations to the City Council only after extensive study. This preliminary summary of information has been prepared by the Commission staff and was submitted to the Commission when it initiated consideration of the historical and architectural qualities of this potential landmark.

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